

user group, the user group having as members a plurality of wireless telephones, the wireless telephone being a member of the user group;

receive a second input indicating that a second member of the user group has accepted the call initiation request;

receive a third input indicating that a call has been connected between the initiating party and the second member; and

send a signal from the wireless telephone requesting to join the call.

22. (Original) The wireless telephone of claim 21, wherein the instructions further include instructions to:

cause an output on an output device on the wireless telephone indicating that the first input, second input, and third input were received by the wireless telephone.

23. (Original) The wireless telephone of claim 21, wherein the instructions further include instructions to:

receive an input indicating that the wireless telephone is to block other members from joining the call.

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 are pending in the application; all claims were rejected.

Claims 1, 9, 17, and 19 have been amended as set forth herein.

Claim 1, as amended, requires “signaling to the other members of the user group that the first member has accepted the first call initiation request without first requiring that a signal be received from another member of the user group that requests a call initiation or that indicates acceptance of the first call initiation request.”

Claim 9, as amended, requires “signal the other members of the user group that the first member has accepted the first call initiation request without first requiring that a signal be received from another member of the user group that requests a call initiation or that indicates a desire to accept the first call initiation request.”

These nearly-identical limitations are both fully supported in the specification, *e.g.*, at 0025. This paragraph indicates

[0025] First member 21 may decide to accept the call initiation request and may send acceptance signal 133 over network 10 to call management system 40. Upon receipt of this acceptance signal, call management system 40 may connect a first call 144 over network 10 between first member 21 and communication device 31. ... Call management system may also send acceptance notification 155 over network 10 to the members, other than first member 21, of user group 20. The acceptance notification 155 may include the identity of the member that accepted the call initiation request, and the wireless telephones that receive the acceptance notification may display the fact that the call has been accepted and the identify of the accepting member on a screen.

Similarly, paragraph 0030 indicates:

When an acceptance notification has been received from a first member of the user group, the call management system connects a call between the initiating party and the first member (404). The call management system then signals the other members of the user group that the first member has accepted the first call initiation request (405).

Note that, as clearly described above, the call management system signals the other members of the user group that the first member has accepted the first call initiation request, and does so automatically, without first requiring that a signal be received from another member of the user group that requests a call initiation or that indicates a desire to accept the first call initiation request. Other support for this claim language can be found, e.g., in 0026, and elsewhere in the specification.

Note also that whether or not a signal is received from another member of the user group, the description of the operation of these embodiments, in the passages cited above, clearly indicates that no such signal is required.

If the Examiner has questions or concerns regarding the entry of this amendment, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney for a telephone interview, before issuing a final Office Action, to discuss these particular distinguishing claim limitations.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

The Claim Objections are noted, but the Applicant believes that no amendments are necessary, and the claims are clear and definite as written. Note that MPEP 706.03(d) indicates that this sort of antecedent basis objection “should ONLY be used in aggravated situations where the lack of antecedent basis makes the scope of the claim indeterminate.” Here, in claims 1 and 8, the reference to “the other members,” juxtaposed with “the first member”, is clear and definite to any reader. In claims 6 and 14, the phrase “information identifying the first member” does not require an antecedent basis. In claim 17, although applicant believes that the claim was clear and definite as written, the definite article “the” has been deleted.

These are respectfully traversed.

CLAIM REJECTIONS -- 35 U.S.C. §112

Claim 19 was rejected as indefinite. This claim has been amended, and this rejection is believed to be obviated.

Art Rejections

Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 9-11, 13, 15, 18, 19, 21, and 22 were rejected as anticipated by Alfred (USP 6,393,275, hereinafter “Alfred”). Claims 4, 6, 12, and 14 were rejected as obvious over Alfred in view of Jonsson (USP 6,115,613, hereinafter “Jonsson”). Claims 8, 20, and 23 were rejected as obvious over Alfred in view of Grube *et al.* (USP 5,463,617, hereinafter “Grube”). Claim 16 was rejected as obvious over Alfred in view of Ahya *et al.*

(USP 6,600,928, hereinafter “Ahya”). Claim 17 was rejected as obvious over Alfred in view of Rosenthal *et al.* (USP 5,953,400, hereinafter “Rosenthal”).

Applicant first notes that the earliest effective filing date of this application is December 11, 2000, which is after November 29, 2000, not before it as the Office Action states. The changes to 35 USC § 102 (e) are not believed to impact the analysis below.

All rejections are traversed, as described below.

With regard to independent claims 1 and 9, and their respective dependents, claims 1 and 9 have been amended to clarify the claimed method and system operation. As described in the specification, when a call placed to the user group is accepted by a first member, all the other members are then notified that the call has been accepted. This differs from the teachings of Alfred, that indicate that other members are only notified that the line is in use if they first try to access the line; that is, when the other members send a signal indicating that they wish to accept or initiate a call.

Nor is this feature taught or suggested by Jonsson, Grube, Ahya, or Rosenthal, alone or in combination.

As such, claims 1 and 9, as amended, and dependent claims 2-8 and 10-17 distinguish over Alfred and all other cited art and are believed to be allowable.

With regard to claim 18, Alfred does not appear to teach or suggest first, second, and third signals as claimed. While the claimed “first signal” is arguably met by the call setup signal described in col. 5 lines 6-9, there does not appear to be a teaching or suggestion of the second and third claimed signals. While the “line in use” message described by Alfred could

arguably satisfy either the claimed second or third claimed signal, as the “line in use” signal is sent after the first responding telephone responds and the call is set up with the first responding telephone, there is no teaching in Alfred that two different signals are sent – a “second signal” when the call is accepted by another telephone and a “third signal” when the call is set up with the other telephone. Nor is this claimed feature taught or suggested by the other art of record.

As such, independent claim 18, as filed, distinguishes over Alfred and all other cited art, and claims 18-20 should be allowed.

The same argument as stated above with regard to claim 18 applies to claim 21, substituting “input” for “signal” in the claim language, and so independent claim 21, as filed, distinguishes over Alfred and all other cited art, and claims 21-23 should be allowed.

Other significant distinctions over the claimed are remain, but need not be argued as all claims have been distinguished over the cited art.

Thus, all rejections are traversed. Reconsideration and allowance of all remaining claims is respectfully requested.

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CONCLUSION

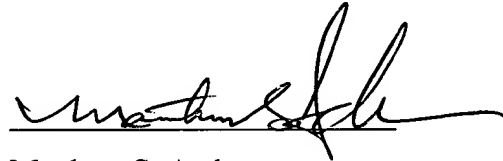
As a result of the foregoing, the Applicant asserts that the Claims in the Application are in condition for allowance, and respectfully requests an early allowance of such Claims.

If any issues arise, or if the Examiner has any suggestions for expediting allowance of this Application, the Applicant respectfully invites the Examiner to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below or at *manderson@davismunck.com*.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees connected with this communication or credit any overpayment to Davis Munck Deposit Account No. 50-0208.

Respectfully submitted,
Davis Munck, P.C.

Date: 3/8/5



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